



[Top Iowa Fishing Spots for the Week of April 23](#)

The way we interact with others may be a little different right now with Iowa's current State of Emergency. The Iowa DNR has made adjustments to protect the health and safety of state employees, the public, and our angling community.

But that doesn't mean you can't go fishing. Stay safe when fishing this spring with these tips:

- Try a new fishing spot — if your regular fishing location is popular and busy, try out a new one where less people are fishing.
- Once you find your spot, keep at least 6 feet of distance between you and other groups.
- Stick with your immediate family, but keep groups to fewer than 10 people.
- Bring lures from home instead of buying bait to minimize your interaction with other people.
- Bring hand sanitizer and wash your hands often.

This weekly fishing report is compiled from information gathered from local bait shops, angler creel surveys and county and state parks staff. You can check the activity of your favorite lake or stretch of river within each district, including which species are being caught, a rating of the bite (slow, fair, good or excellent), as well as a hot bait or lure pattern.

For current information, contact the district fisheries office at the phone number listed at the end of each district report.

- [NORTHWEST](#)
- [NORTHEAST](#)
- [MISSISSIPPI RIVER](#)
- [SOUTHEAST](#)
- [SOUTHWEST](#)

NORTHWEST

Black Hawk Lake

The outdoor walkway on the fish house structure in Town Bay is open to anglers; the indoor portion of the structure remains closed to the public due to physical distancing guidelines. Look for the bite to pick up as temperatures warm and fish move close to shore. **Yellow Perch** - Good: Anglers are catching perch in Town Bay. Sorting is needed, but keepers are 8-10 inches. **Black Crappie** – Fair. **Largemouth Bass** – Fair. **Walleye** - Fair: Shore fishing can be productive this time of year. Historically, walleye fishing on Black Hawk Lake really picks up during the end of April/early May. Recent gillnet catch numbers suggest a good population of large adult walleyes in Black Hawk Lake. Use twisters, crankbaits and leeches or crawlers fished under a bobber.

Brushy Creek Lake

Black Crappie - Fair: Expect the crappie to move close to shore as water temperatures approach the upper 50s. Use a small piece of crawler or minnow on a jig in 5-10 feet of water near rocks or structure. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Anglers are picking up a few on spinner baits and plastics in areas near submerged structure. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Try crawlers on a small jig in 5-10 feet of water. Some is sorting needed. **Walleye** – Fair.

North Twin Lake

Expect the panfish bite to pick up with warming water temperatures. Fish anywhere with structure near shore.

Storm Lake (including Little Storm Lake)

Fishing has been productive from shore and in the main lake. Storm Lake has a daily limit of 3 walleye and all 17- to 22-inch walleye must be released; and no more than one walleye longer than 22 inches may be taken per day. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Use crawlers and minnows on a small jig fished near shore, in the marina near the inlet and along the north and east shore of the main lake. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye fishing has been productive. Pick up walleye in the marina from shore and also in the main lake. Use a twister, crankbait and a leech or crawler fished under a bobber. **Yellow Perch** – Fair: Pick up perch along shore in the marina and north and east shores. **White Bass** - Good: Anglers are picking up white bass from shore. Use twisters, crawlers or crankbaits in the marina near the inlet and north and east shores in the main lake.

For more information, contact the Black Hawk District office at 712-657-2638.

Clear Lake

The water temperature is in the upper forties. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Use chicken liver or cut bait fished on the bottom. Best bite is after sunset. **Walleye** - Good: Anglers are having success drifting fishing jigs near structure or vertical jigging a minnow on the rock reefs. Fish are biting throughout the day, but the best bite is late afternoon as the water warms. **Yellow Bass** – Fair: Yellow bass are being caught from the jetties. Boat anglers should try fishing the edge of the vegetation on the north shore. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Yellow perch are being caught from the jetties. **Black Crappie** – Slow.

Crystal Lake

The courtesy dock at the boat ramp and the fish clean station are in.

Eldred Sherwood Lake

The park gates are closed. Fishing access is walk-in only.

Lake Smith

Fishing has been slow.

Lower Pine Lake

Popular fishing areas become crowded in the afternoon and evening; fish in the morning to avoid crowds. **Bluegill** - Good: Shore anglers are catching good numbers of 4 to 7 inch fish. **Black Crappie** – Good. **Largemouth Bass** – Fair. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try chicken liver or cut bait fished on the bottom near the spillway. Best bite is after sunset.

Silver Lake (Worth)

The courtesy dock at the boat ramp is in. **Bluegill** – Slow.

Upper Pine Lake

Popular fishing areas become crowded in the afternoon and evening; fish in the morning to avoid crowds. The fish cleaning station is unavailable at this time. **Bluegill** - Good: Shore anglers are catching good numbers of 4 to 7 inch fish. **Largemouth Bass** – Fair.

Winnebago River

The river level continues to drop; fishing is picking up. Try a minnow or crankbait fished along current breaks. Use a crawler fished on the bottom for suckers. **Northern Pike** - Fair.

For information on the lakes and rivers in north central Iowa, contact the Clear Lake Fish and Wildlife office at 641-357-3517.

Center Lake

The lake is completely ice free.

East Okoboji Lake

The Walleye Season is closed. The water temperature is 46 degrees. There has been a fair panfish bite in many of the bays and harbors. **Bluegill** – Fair. **Black Crappie** – Fair. **Yellow Perch** – Fair.

Ingham Lake

The lake is completely ice free.

Lost Island Lake

The lake is completely ice free. **Yellow Perch** – Fair. **Walleye** – Fair.

Silver Lake (Dickinson)

Walleye – Good.

Spirit Lake

The Walleye Season is closed. The water temperature is 45 degrees.

Trumbull Lake

The lake is completely ice free. **Yellow Perch** - Fair: Size quality is outstanding with some sorting. Use jigs and minnows or wigglers in the main lake.

West Okoboji Lake

The Walleye Season is closed. The water temperature is 45 degrees. A good spring bass bite has been observed in canal areas, as well a good panfish bite in various harbors. **Bluegill** - Fair. **Black Crappie** - Fair. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair:

The Walleye Season is closed for the Iowa Great Lakes. Most boat ramps are in and open for use. Iowa Great Lake water temperatures range from 40 to 45 degrees. Water temperatures have dropped in the last week, even leading to some areas partially icing over at night. This coming week is forecast to be much warmer. The bite should pick up as temperatures continue to rise. For current conditions, call the Spirit Lake District Office at 712-336-1840.

NORTHEAST

Bloody Run Creek

A [fish kill](#) affecting trout occurred on Bloody Run about 1.5 miles above and about 1 mile below the Iris Ave. bridge Saturday, April 18. Source and cause is not known. Fishing in much of this area is by permission only. Other areas open to the public should be fine to fish.

Cedar River (above Nashua)

Water levels are stabilizing with improving clarity. **Walleye** - Good: Anglers are finding good numbers of fish below dams and along current breaks. A variety of lures and baits are working. **Channel Catfish** - Excellent: Use dead chubs and worms fished on the bottom.

Decorah District Streams

All streams are being stocked. **All trout stream stockings are unannounced due to COVID-19 precautions.** Hatchery grounds are open to the public, but feeders and other conveniences are temporarily closed for prevention precautions. Hatchery visitors must be mindful of one another's safety and keep at least 6 feet of distance between you and others. Currently, DNR wildlife management areas are open to normal recreational uses. **Brook Trout** - Good: When fishing private property open to angling, leave that property as was or better by picking up trash. Close gates if you opened them; be considerate. **Brown Trout** - Good: Blue-winged olive and caddisfly hatches are good to excellent. An excellent time to fish for browns is when the water gets cloudy. Use hair jigs or spinners for aggressive fish. **Rainbow Trout** - Excellent: Stocked fish and hold-overs are biting well. Use a worm or cheese floated through a pool under a bobber. Use an ultra-light pole and reel for fun action.

Lake Hendricks

Hit and miss fish activity. Water temperatures are in the 50's. **Black Crappie** - Good: Find crappie suspended over brush piles or submersed structure. Use a minnow and

drift over structure. **Bluegill** - Slow: Try a small piece of nightcrawler or waxworm under a bobber. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Fish the windrow shoreline with a dead chub or minnow or worm on the bottom. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Use a crankbait or jerk bait over structure.

Lake Meyer

Water temperatures are in the low 50's. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use a minnow fished over brush piles. **Bluegill** - Good: Try a small piece of worm or waxworm fished under a bobber along a sunny shoreline. **Northern Pike** - Slow: Find pike in the shallows spawning. Use a spoon with a steel leader to prevent line cuts. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: Try a jerk bait or crankbait fished along a brush pile or rock structure.

Turkey River (above Clermont)

Water levels are falling with improved clarity. Water temperatures are in the 50's. **Walleye** - Good: Find walleye in runs and along current breaks. Use hair jigs and spinners. **White Sucker** - Excellent: Suckers are starting to bite. Use a nightcrawler fished on the bottom.

Upper Iowa River (above Decorah)

Water levels are stabilizing with improved clarity. Turnover is occurring around Lime Springs causing the water to look scummy. Water temperatures are in the the low 50's. **Walleye** - Good: Use minnows or hair jigs fished in runs and around current breaks. **White Sucker** - Excellent: Sucker activity is picking up. Try nightcrawlers fished on the stream bottom.

Upper Iowa River (below Decorah)

Water level are stabilizing with good water clarity. Water temperatures are in the the low 50's. If paddling, [dress for water temperatures](#); current is strong. **Walleye** - Good: Anglers are finding fish in eddies and runs. Use crankbaits and spinners. **White Sucker** - Excellent: Try a hook tipped with a nightcrawler fished on the bottom.

Volga Lake

Anglers are finding fish. **Bluegill** - Good: Use a small hook tipped with waxworm or small piece of nightcrawler fished around brush piles and rocky shores. **Black Crappie** - Good: Try a minnow suspended over brush piles or other structure. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Use a jerk bait fished over structure with a slow retrieve. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Try a dead minnow or nightcrawler fished along windrow shore. Trophy catfish are abundant in Volga Lake.

Water levels are stabilizing and water clarity is good to excellent on area rivers. Expect rain and cooler temperatures on Friday. Temperatures will rise for the weekend with highs in the 50's and lows above freezing. For current fishing information, please call the Chuck Gipp Decorah Fish Hatchery at 563-382-8324.

Big Woods Lake

Anglers are catching some crappie on Big Woods Lake. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Try crappie jigs or a minnow fished under a bobber over structure near the dam.

[Casey Lake \(aka Hickory Hills Lake\)](#)

Anglers are catching largemouth bass, bluegill and some nice 10-13 inch crappie. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Cast crankbaits and deep divers. **Black Crappie** - Good: Try crappie jigs or a minnow fished under a bobber over structure near the dam and in the coves. **Bluegill** - Fair: Use a small piece of worm on a small hook and sinker fished under a bobber off of the shorelines. Try fishing artificial flies using a slow presentation.

[Cedar River \(Nashua to La Porte City\)](#)

Reports of anglers catching a few walleye and northern pike on the Cedar River. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve plastics tipped with or without a minnow or crankbaits; walleye have moved out of over-wintering areas. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Try a live chub or shiner fished under a bobber near slack water areas off of main current or cast and retrieve large plastics or spinners.

[George Wyth Lake](#)

There are an abundant number of pike along the willows near the shoreline edges in George Wyth Lake. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Cast and retrieve spinnerbaits near the shore.

[Maquoketa River \(above Monticello\)](#)

Reports of anglers catching a few walleye and smallmouth bass on the Maquoketa River. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve plastics tipped with or without a minnow or crankbaits; walleye have moved out of over-wintering areas. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Try a jig and plastic tipped with a minnow or cast spinner or crankbaits.

[Shell Rock River \(Greene to Shell Rock\)](#)

Anglers are catching some walleye on the Shell Rock River. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve plastics tipped with or without a minnow or crankbaits; walleye have moved out of over-wintering areas.

[Wapsipinicon River \(Tripoli to Troy Mills\)](#)

A recent electrofishing survey revealed numerous year classes of walleye. **Walleye** - Fair: Cast and retrieve plastics tipped with or without a minnow or crankbaits; walleye have moved out of over-wintering areas. **Smallmouth Bass** - Fair: Try a jig and plastic tipped with a minnow or cast spinner or crankbaits. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Float a live chub or shiner under a bobber or cast bucktail spinners.

Interior rivers are in excellent condition. Walleye, pike and smallmouth bass are biting also on the Cedar, Shell Rock, Wapsipinicon and Maquoketa rivers. Few reports of panfish on the area Black Hawk County lakes at this time. Trout stocking season is in full swing, but all stockings are unannounced due to COVID-19 precautions. All state fish hatcheries are closed to the public. Call the Manchester Hatchery at 563-927-3276 for more information.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER

[Mississippi River Pool 9](#)

River level at Lansing has fallen to 11.4 feet and is falling this week. New Albin Army

Road is closed, but may open up next week. **Sauger** - Fair: Try a jig tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye are moving up to the dams; use jigs tipped with a minnow. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are going on a feed frenzy to prepare for spawning. Fish the warmer shallows in backwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Excellent: Use a small piece of crawler fished just off the bottom. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use a minnow under a bobber in areas with less current in backwaters.

Mississippi River Pool 10

River level is 21.4 feet at Lyxnville and a gradual fall is predicted this week. Ramps are under water. Noble's Landing and Sny Magill road may open up next week. **Sauger** - Fair: Try a jig tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye are moving up to the dams; use jigs tipped with a minnow. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are going on a feed frenzy to prepare for spawning. Fish the warmer shallows in backwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Excellent: Use a small piece of crawler fished just off the bottom. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use a minnow under a bobber in areas with less current in backwaters.

Mississippi River Pool 11

River level is 12.9 feet at Guttenberg and is predicted to gradually recede near 11 feet next week. Ramps are expected to come up out of the water next week with the fall in river levels. **Sauger** - Fair: Try a jig tipped with a minnow in the tailwaters of the Lock & Dam. **Walleye** - Fair: Walleye are moving up to the dams; use jigs tipped with a minnow. **Northern Pike** - Fair: Northern pike are going on a feed frenzy to prepare for spawning. Fish the warmer shallows in backwaters. **Yellow Perch** - Excellent: Use a small piece of crawler fished just off the bottom. **Black Crappie** - Good: Use a minnow under a bobber in areas with less current in backwaters.

Upper Mississippi flood waters are steadily falling. Water temperature is in the 50's. Standing on lock walls to fish is prohibited due to COVID-19. **Walleye slot length limits on the Mississippi River now apply on the entire Mississippi River in Iowa, reflecting regulation changes in Minnesota and Wisconsin waters of Pools 9-12.** All walleyes less than 15 inches long and between 20-27 inches long must be immediately released. Only one walleye greater than 27 inches can be harvested per day. Combined walleye/sauger daily harvest limit of 6 and possession of 12.

Mississippi River Pool 12

The water level at the Dubuque Lock and Dam is receding and is near 13.2 feet; levels are near 15.2 feet at the RR bridge. The water is still near moderate flood stage. The water temperature has risen to 51 degrees. The water clarity is fair. **Walleye** - No Report: Lots of nice slot walleyes have been caught; the fishery looks to be healthy. Walleyes are in the midst of spawning; the bite has slowed. **Northern Pike** - No Report: Pike are done spawning; the bite should improve quickly. Flashy spinners in warm flooded waters might trigger these predators. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: It was a great spring to catch yellow perch. Expect a good perch season as water comes down. **Bluegill** - Slow: Some bluegills were starting to be caught out of flooded areas

with hard banks while others were caught out of the tailwater. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Some crappie were reported out of marina areas, especially under boat docks.

Mississippi River Pool 13

Water level at the Bellevue Lock and Dam has receded to 13.9 feet. The water temperature has increased to 51 degrees. The DNR boat ramp and the south ramp at Sabula is partially flooded. **Walleye** - No Report: Lots of nice slot walleyes were caught this spring; the fishery looks to be healthy. Walleyes are at the tail end of spawning. **Paddlefish** - No Report: **The paddlefish season has ended for the year.** **Yellow Perch** - Slow: Some yellow perch are being reported in the tailwaters and flooded backwater near Sabula. Most anglers are using a nightcrawler for bait. **Shorthead redhorse** - Good: These fish are being caught in the tailwaters and running up local tributaries. All you need is a simple worm rig fished on the bottom. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Use cut bait in flooded areas for abundant channel catfish. **Black Crappie** - Fair: A few crappies are being taken in flooded areas under boat docks or large trees.

Mississippi River Pool 14

The water level is 14.3 feet at the Fulton Lock and Dam, 16.1 feet at Camanche and 10 feet at LeClaire. These are still in action flood stage. Water temperature is around 52 degrees. **Paddlefish**- No Report: **The paddlefish season has ended for the year.** **Walleye** - No Report: Lots of slot walleyes have been caught; the fishery looks to be very healthy. Walleyes are in the tail end of spawning. **Yellow Perch** - Slow: It was a great spring for catching yellow perch. These fish are mostly done spawning and high water should make for a good spawn. **Shorthead redhorse** - Good: Redhorse are being caught in the tailwaters and running up local tributaries. All you need is a simple worm rig fished on the bottom. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Cut bait works well in the flooded timber and for cats running up the Wapsipinicon River.

Mississippi River Pool 15

Water level is around 14.7 feet at Rock Island and is receding. The water temperature is around 53 degrees. Water is stained. River levels are at action flood stage.

Water levels are receding in the district this week. Lower Pool 14 and Pool 15 are still in action flooding stages. Ramps and parking lots will need to be cleaned; please be patient. If you have any fishing questions, please contact the Bellevue Fisheries Station 563--880-8781.

Mississippi River Pool 16

Tailwater stage is 15.28 feet at Lock and Dam 15 in the Quad Cities and is falling. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 15. River stage is 15.64 feet at Fairport; flood stage is 14 feet. Clark's Ferry Landing and Shady Creek are closed. Water is over the ramps at the Fairport Recreational Area. We have not received any fishing report information for this pool.

Mississippi River Pool 17

Tailwater stage is 14.88 feet at Lock and Dam 16 in Muscatine and is falling. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 16. River stage is 16.46 feet at Muscatine. Flood stage is 16

feet at Muscatine. The ramps at Big Timber and Kilpeck are closed. We have not received any fishing report information for this pool.

Mississippi River Pool 18

Tailwater stage is 15.85 feet at Lock and Dam 17 at New Boston and is falling. Flood stage is 15 feet at Lock and Dam 17. River stage is 15.18 feet at Keithsburg; flood stage is 14 feet. The Toolsboro ramp is closed due to high water. The Hawkeye Dolbee access will have water over it. We have not received any tailwater fishing reports for this pool this week.

Mississippi River Pool 19

Tailwater stage is 11.93 feet at Lock and Dam 18 and is falling. Flood stage is 10 feet at Lock and Dam 18. River stage is 16.75 feet at Burlington; flood stage is 15 feet. River stage is 528.96 feet at Fort Madison; flood stage is 528 feet. We have not received any fishing reports or ramp condition reports for this pool.

River stage is still above flood stage. River stages have been falling the past week. Main channel water temperature is around 50 degrees. Many boat ramps are closed due to the high water. Fishing has been slow with the high water conditions. If you have questions on fishing Pools 16-19 contact the Fairport Fish Hatchery at 563-263-5062.

SOUTHEAST

Big Hollow Lake

Water is starting to warm back up after last week's snow (8 inches). Water temperature is just above 50 degrees. Water clarity is good. **Largemouth Bass** - Anglers are catching a few bass again. They should start to bite again when the sun starts to shine and the water warms back up. **Black Crappie** - Fair: A couple of anglers that know the lake very well caught a good number of crappies last weekend in deeper water.

Lake Belva Deer

Water temperature has gotten back up to 50 degrees. Water clarity is very good at 9+ feet. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Anglers continue to pick up a few bass. Need warmer weather to bring the bass back into the rocky shorelines.

Lake Darling

The water is warming back up after last week's snow. Water temperature is 51 degrees as of Wednesday (April 22) morning. Water clarity is good at about 4 feet. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Anglers continue to pick up a few bass in the colder water. The bite should pick back up as soon as the sun warm the water back up.

Lost Grove Lake

Water temperature is around 49-50 degrees. Water clarity is about five feet. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Bass fishing has started to pick back up on days when the wind doesn't blow you off the lake. Work the shallows in the flooded timber to find some nice bass. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Crappies remain out in deep water.

Skunk River (Coppock to Mississippi River)

The Skunk River is about half bank full. Current is still moving fairly fast. **Channel**

Catfish - Fair: Use cut bait or nightcrawlers in the slack water.

For more information on the above lake, call the Lake Darling Fisheries Office at 319-694-2430.

Central Park Lake

Fishing has been slow. Target weed lines and rock structures that have warmer water. The boat dock is in, but restrooms and other facilities are closed.

Coralville Reservoir

The lake is at spring pool of 679.3 feet. Boating above Lake Macbride ramp is not recommended at spring pool. The ramp at Macbride is very shallow. **Channel Catfish** - Slow: Use cut bait around the 380/965 bridges. Shallow windblown bays can also be good. **White Crappie** - Slow: Try minnows or bright colored jigs around brush piles.

Diamond Lake

The dock/kayak launch are in, but the bathrooms are closed. **Black Crappie** - Fair: A good number of fish have been caught off the jetties. Try small jigs tipped with worms or waxworms fished under a bobber.

Iowa Lake (Iowa Co.)

The boat dock is in, but buildings and restrooms are closed. **Black Crappie** – Fair: Shore anglers are catching some fish in 3-6 of water with jigs or bobber/worm. Keep moving until you find an active school. Some crappies remain out deep. **Largemouth Bass** – Fair: Some nice sized fish have been caught this week.

Lake Macbride

Water temperatures are in the low 50's. Water clarity is very high. The docks are in. Bathrooms and other facilities are closed due to [COVID concerns](#). **Black Crappie** - Fair: The bite picked up this week. Target brush and rock piles in 15 feet of water or less. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)** - Slow: Fish windblown flats and banks where shad may be found. **Walleye** - Fair: The cold snap last week threw off the spawn and where to find walleye. Some are being caught shallow towards evening, while most are off shore. **Muskellunge** - Slow: Some fish are being picked up along rock on jerkbaits.

Liberty Centre Pond

2000 trout were stocked in this North Liberty Pond. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Try small jigs, spinners, spoons, scented baits or worms.

Otter Creek Lake

The park is open and the boat ramp dock is in; restrooms, fishing cleaning station, nature center, and camping area gates are closed. No fishing reports are available.

Pleasant Creek Lake

The docks are in; bathrooms are closed. **Walleye** - Fair: Try three-way rigs during the day and jigs or crankbaits towards evening fished along the dam. **Muskellunge** - Slow: There have been quite a few anglers, but reports are limited. Jerkbait work best.

Prairie Park Fishery

2000 trout were stocked here. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. **Rainbow Trout** - Fair: Try small jigs, spinners, spoons, scented baits or worms.

Union Grove Lake

The boat docks are in, but the park facilities are closed due to COVID-19. **Largemouth Bass** - Slow: Size is still small here. **Bluegill** - Slow: Catch bluegill up to 8 inches.

For more information, contact the Lake Macbride Fisheries Station at 319-624-3615.

Lake Miami

Anglers are catching some largemouth bass along the shore.

Lake Sugema

Use nightcrawlers to catch catfish. Anglers are also been catching crappies with minnows and jigs.

Lake Wapello

Catch catfish with nightcrawlers or cut bait. Target largemouth bass around structure.

Ottumwa Park Pond South (Trout Pond)

2000 trout were stocked here. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout. Try small jigs, in-line spinners, spoons, or worms.

Rathbun Reservoir

The current lake level is 905.32 msl. Normal operating elevation is 904.0 msl. Lake Rathbun has zebra mussels, so make sure to properly drain, clean, and dry equipment before transporting to another water body. Most docks will not be in until mid-May. Water temperature is in the mid to lower 50's. **Channel Catfish** - Good: Use nightcrawlers on windblown shores. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Crappie fishing remains slow. The water temperature is in the low 50's.

Red Haw Lake

Anglers are catching largemouth bass along the shore. The docks have been put in.

The district includes Appanoose, Davis, Lucas, Mahaska, Monroe, Wapello, Wayne and Van Buren counties. Contact the Rathbun Fish Hatchery at 641-647-2406 with questions about fishing in south central Iowa.

SOUTHWEST

Banner Lake (south)

Rainbow Trout – Good: Use in-line spinners, small jigs with twister tails or swimbaits, or live bait under a bobber. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

Big Creek Lake

Walleye - Fair: The walleye bite is starting to pick up. Try jigs tipped with plastics or live

minnows along rocky shores or troll live bait rigs in 10 to 20 feet of water. Target the East Boat ramp bay, the West Boat Ramp and the marina to beach area. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Crappies have not moved shallow yet in Big Creek, but will begin to soon. Try live minnows near any shallow wood and rock, especially in the coves.

Boone District Farm Ponds

Black Crappie - Fair: Many of the [community fishing ponds](#) spread throughout the Des Moines Metro will offer a good early season crappie, bluegill and bass bite; they warm faster than the larger lakes. Use live bait under floats or slowly retrieve twister tail and swimbaits. If a pond has any rock shore, try there first. [Fish Local](#) signs mark which ponds are open to public fishing.

[Des Moines River \(Saylorville to Red Rock\)](#)

Walleye - Fair: April is a good time to target walleye and northern pike below the dams and mouths of creeks where clearer water is coming in. Use jigs tipped with twister tails, shad, and shiner imitating swimbaits or live minnows.

[Lake Petocka](#)

Rainbow Trout - Good: Catch trout left from the winter stocking with in-line spinners, small jigs with twister tails or swimbaits, or live bait under a bobber. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

[Terra Lake](#)

Rainbow Trout - Good: Use in-line spinners, small jigs with twister tails or swimbaits, or live bait under a bobber. You need a valid fishing license and pay the trout fee to fish for or possess trout.

For more information on Central Iowa lakes and rivers, call Ben Dodd at 641-891-3795 or Andy Otting at 515-204-5885.

[Farm Creek Lake](#)

Channel Catfish - Fair: Anglers are still catching catfish. Cast cut bait or shad sides off the new jetty on the west side of the lake. Fish range from 2 to 5 pounds.

[Greenfield Lake](#)

Greenfield is a good lake to catch spring catfish. It also gives anglers a chance to catch a trophy-size channel catfish. **Channel Catfish** - No Report: Fish shad sides on the wind-blown shore, especially in the upper end of the lake where water warms sooner. **Black Crappie** - No Report: Target around jetties and rocky shores.

[Lake Anita](#)

Lake Anita can provide good fishing this time of year. Fish will move into the upper end of the lake as water temperatures warm. **Bluegill** - Slow: Anglers report catching bluegills in brush piles. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Early crappie fishing can be very good on warm sunny days behind the pontoon boats. Cast a minnow two feet under a bobber with a slow retrieve.

[Lake Manawa](#)

It's time to target channel catfish at Lake Manawa. Walleyes are concentrated on the

south shore. Crappie bite has slowed a bit this week with cooler temperatures. **Channel Catfish** - Fair: Fish the wind-blown shores with shad sides or cut bait to catch channel catfish of all sizes. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Anglers are having the best success in the south end of the canals. Cast a minnow 2 feet under a bobber with a slow retrieve. **Walleye** - Fair: Target walleyes on the south shore where they are spawning. Cast twister tails tipped with minnows with a slow retrieve. **Wiper (Hybrid Striped Bass)**- Slow: A few wipers are being caught by walleye anglers.

Prairie Rose Lake

Anglers are starting to pick up crappies and bluegills around the jetties. **Bluegill** - Fair: A few large bluegills are being caught around brush piles and the reefs. **Black Crappie** - Fair: Catch black crappie around the jetties and underwater reefs. Large fish will average 10 inches. **Largemouth Bass** - Good: A large population of 12 to 14 inch bass offer fun [catch and release fishing](#).

For more information on lakes in the Southwest District call the Cold Springs office at 712-769-2587.

Green Valley Lake

Largemouth Bass - Slow: Use crankbaits fished along rocky wind-blown shores for largemouth bass up to 20 inches.

Little River Watershed Lake

Dock is in at the main ramp. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Try crankbaits fished along wind-blown rocky shorelines or jigs fished near cedar tree brush piles for largemouth bass up to 20 inches.

Three Mile Lake

Walleye - Good: Use jigs tipped with live bait fished near main lake points or crankbaits fished along the dam for walleyes up to 22 inches. **Black Crappie** - Slow: Try jigs tipped with a minnow fished along the flooded timber for crappies up to 10 inches.

Twelve Mile Creek Lake

Dock is in at the main ramp. **Walleye** - Fair: Use jigs tipped with live bait fished near main lake points or crankbaits fished along the dam for walleyes up to 26 inches. **Black Crappie** - Slow: A few anglers are catching crappies up to 11 inches with live bait fished along cedar tree brush piles. **Largemouth Bass** - Fair: Use crankbaits fished along wind-blown shores or jigs fished near cedar tree brush piles for largemouth bass up to 20 inches.

Water temperature in most Mount Ayr district lakes is in the low 50's. For more information, contact the Mount Ayr Fisheries office at 641-464-3108.

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